

REMARKS

This paper is presented in response to the non-final official action of January 4, 2008, wherein (a) claims 1-15 were pending, (b) claims 9-15 were withdrawn from consideration, (c) claims 1-3, 5, and 8 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Kepplinger, et al. US 5,584,910 ("Kepplinger"), and (d) claims 4, 6, and 7 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but deemed allowable in substance.

This paper is timely filed, as it is accompanied by a petition for automatic extension of time to file in the first month, and the requisite petition fee.

In the amendments, Claim 1 is amended to recite drying the iron ores or the additives by using a branched exhaust gas which is exhausted from at least one fluidized bed while conveying the mixtures to the fluidized bed by using the branched exhaust gas which is directed to the fluidized bed. Claims 2-8 have been amended for clarity, and claims 9-15 have been cancelled.

As a result of the foregoing, claims 1-8 are pending and at issue. Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is solicited.

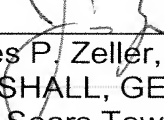
Amended claim 1 recites "drying the iron ores or the additives by using a branched exhaust gas which is exhausted from at least one fluidized bed while conveying the mixtures to the fluidized bed by using the branched exhaust gas which is directed to the fluidized bed." However, the offgas disclosed in Kepplinger is directed only to a preheating reactor 1, and not to a fluidized-bed, which is contrary to the inventive method recited in claim 1. In other words, a supply direction of the offgas in the present invention is totally different from that disclosed in Kepplinger.

Accordingly, the presently-claimed inventive method is different from the process disclosed in Kepplinger, in that the offgas is supplied to the fluidized-bed to transfer the iron ores and additives thereto in the invention. In view thereof, reconsideration and withdrawal of the anticipation rejection is solicited.

Should the examiner wish to discuss the foregoing or any matter of form in an effort to advance this application toward allowance, she is urged to telephone the undersigned at the indicated number..

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Respectfully submitted,

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